

ANNOUNCING OCTOBER'S SPOT AWARDS



Cindy Lucowitz

Congratulations Cindy, you were nominated by James McKeivier for a SPOT award. Listed below is the submitted nomination.

I would like to nominate Cindy Lucowitz, ES III, for a Spot Award. Cindy has been with the Department a little over three years as an Air inspector in the Southwest Regional Office (SWRO). Cindy is a very valuable and dependable employee. Cindy is responsible for maintaining the air monitoring equipment in our region. She conducts calibrations and quarterly Method 21 certifications of our TVA's. Cindy also keeps our calibration gases up-to-date and stocked. A recent internal audit found our equipment, procedures and documentation to be impeccable. The auditor was very impressed with Cindy, her work, and the quality of the required documentation.

Cindy has an excellent attitude and accepts additional assignments without complaining. She recently represented the Department at a public ozone meeting after a co-worker was unable to attend due to an unscheduled absence. Even though it was extremely short notice, she volunteered to represent the SWRO at the meeting. A local Community Advisory Panel recently requested a speaker to update the group on ozone matters. Again, Cindy willingly volunteered to accommodate their request; the presentation was well received.

Earlier this year, Cindy was the lead inspector on an air inspection at a local refinery. The inspection lasted over a week and involved a team of 4 inspectors. Even though Areas of Concern were cited, the environmental manager from the refinery called to say that Cindy was very organized, knowledgeable, and professional during their visit. He was very complimentary of her abilities and felt she did a great job leading the inspection; it was nice to hear kind words about one of our employees from the regulated community.

Cindy is a diligent, dependable employee who goes above and beyond in the conductance of her job duties. I feel Cindy should be awarded a SPOT award.



Melanie Bauder

Congratulations Melanie, you were nominated by Jim Pate for a SPOT award. Listed below is the submitted nomination.

I am nominating Melanie Bauder, an Environmental Scientist 3 for ERSD, for the October SPOT award for 2009. I would like to start with describing Melanie as an asset to LDEQ. Her pleasant demeanor helps set her apart in her work area. She is always helpful and understanding in guiding licensees going through a stressful period in obtaining their radiation permit. Melanie assists her supervisor in being the back-up to the National Source Tracking System (NSTS) for increase control quantities of radioactive material being used within the State of Louisiana. The NSTS is a data base where licensed radioactive material of certain quantities and types are track from cradle to grave, their transactions, and possessing. Melanie does not mind taking the time to get a license completed late in the day that a customer of the Radiation Permits Section has requested a rush on.

Melanie also is over the reciprocity data base of all radioactive material licensees and registrations wanting reciprocal recognition of their states license or registration in coming from outside the State of Louisiana to perform work within the State. She maintains this database to ensure that fees are paid and Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) inspection requirements are met. The NRC requires that the State of Louisiana inspect twenty-five percent of radioactive material licensees that come into our State. She sends notices to our radiation surveillance section about reciprocity licensees that need to be inspected so that we meet our quota which is reflected in our Integrated Materials Performance Evaluation Program (IMPEP) review every four years by the NRC.

Melanie has achieved getting her permits, certifications, shielding reviews, and registrations workloads done within the required time frame required with no permit or registration being late over the last year.

Melanie recently assisted in helping organize a four day national radiation meeting held here in Baton Rouge, LA for the Organization of Agreement States (OAS). The heads of all the agreement state radiation programs around the country attended, along with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). The meeting was a wonderful success.

I would sincerely appreciate your consideration of Melanie being nominated for the October SPOT award for 2009.



Jean Kelly

Congratulations Jean, you were nominated by Rodney Mallett for a SPOT award. Listed below is the submitted nomination.

I'm nominating Jean Kelly because she has exemplified what a SPOT Award is all about. She has gone beyond the call of duty to do an excellent job and has been recognized by outside organizations such as the Governor's Press Office. To make her SPOT Award case even stronger, Jean told the Governor's Office that it was DEQ as a department that deserved the recognition. There are other examples of above and beyond that I will include below:

1.) Jean has been asked to compile agency-wide updates to provide to the Governor's Office. These updates are provided to Jean by a variety of DEQ staffers. Jean compiles all the information and writes up a detailed summary for the Governor's Office. Not only does Jean send in the reports, but when the Governor's Office needs updates and more information they will call Jean and say they need more information in a matter of minutes. Once, the Governor's Office needed a quick update on St. Bernard. Jean had the information

to them in a timely manner, prompting them to write, "Jean, I just wanted to tell you your report on St. Bernard was fantastic. Thanks so much for such an informative, well-written brief." To which Jean replied that it was the professional team of DEQ staffers that enabled DEQ to provide such informative updates on the department.

2.) When the Science Teachers of Louisiana had their annual conference in Shreveport, several DEQ employees were going to staff a booth. This is a good time to reach out, front-load and provide information to an audience that has much influence. Jean helped those who were going to attend the conference stuff more than 100 folders with DEQ information to pass out to the people attending the conference. She could have easily just given the brochures to someone and said, "here you go." But, she didn't. She went the extra mile to help them organize the information in DEQ folders.

3.) On a day off, Jean found out about a conference call EPA was having to discuss results from the nationwide school air monitoring effort. Jean called in, listened and provided detailed information to the DEQ air assessment group on what other state's were doing and finding from their air-monitoring efforts. Through Jean's efforts, and the efforts of many others, the department has been able to stay in front of any pressing issues relating to the air toxics study.

These are efforts that go above and beyond. Jean does a great job and her regular duties, but these are examples of Jean going the extra mile to work as part of a team to get the best results for the department in an unselfish manner. She has worked hard to assist the Governor's Office and has been recognized in writing and on a phone call for her efforts. She helps other departments and doesn't play the "not-my-job-description" game. She is always willing to assist. And, finally, even when Jean should be enjoying a day off, she will call in a conference call or respond to an email if it will help the department.



Yvonne Baker

Congratulations Yvonne, you were nominated by Melvin Mitchell for a SPOT award. Listed below is the submitted nomination.

I again recommend Yvonne Wingate Baker for this Month's Spot Award. She has again gone above and beyond the outstanding. This time she managed, supervised, coordinated, recorded and insured the successful administration and implementation of the Sewage/Sludge program.

Over the past 30 days, Yvonne Baker has turned in a truly superior performance. She personally coordinated, drafted, verified, wrote and mailed the first ever Sewage/Sludge Haulers approval certifications to all of the more than 163 companies statewide. In addition, she checked, tracked, examined, validated and personally issued more than 223 other Sewage/Sludge decisions and informational documents to facilities and state agencies. She did not rest, until she had posted the approved listing of Sludge Haulers and Sludge Receiving Facilities on the LDEQ Web page, and has kept the lists of more than 200 up to date virtually on a daily basis. She has dealt directly with

more than 150 problem facilities and 325 intricate applications, requests and inquiries. She is not normally assigned these responsibilities, but took on and completed this extra job with distinction. Each of which posed extremely difficult and never seen before challenges.

Yvonne Wingate Baker shined in accomplishing each and every challenge listed above in an outstanding manner. She faced down each problem and proved to be a truly gifted professional and an exemplary state employee. Her business-like approach, scholarly demeanor and highly professional deportment guaranteed that LDEQ Biosolids Haulers program was executed in a manner to reflect positively upon the public's image of DEQ. Her performance has only gotten better each day. She developed a data tracking systems and refined the document merged mailing and notification procedures for independent use with this program.

In addition to "holding" the Sewage/Sludge program together, Yvonne provided expert input while responding to the many negative comments generated by the issuance of the general permit for oil & gas activities in the territorial seas. She personally answered virtually 100% of the technical questions and was instrumental in the synchronization of the response. As a direct result of her efforts, the LDEQ general permit for oil & gas activities in the territorial seas was issued and will probably be used to set the standard for EPA Region VI future permits for activities in the territorial seas.

Yvonne continued to refine the permit writers compliance and reissuance matrix, associated checklists and guide. She took it upon herself to personally train, mentor and coach new and old employees on coordinating compliance and referrals activities. She developed standardize guidance tools and techniques for permit writers to use as they review the compliance history of facilities when permits are being considered for reissuance.



She was the Division's lead staff member in the production of two diverse Staff Operational Procedure Publications and has been commended in person by the Region VI Headquarters Staff for her professional demeanor and foresight.

In my 42 years of work experience, I have never worked with a harder working, and more deserving individual. Yvonne has a disarming manner and cool ability to resolve the big problems, challenges, and questions associated with the many divergent water permitting protocols. She is our "Lead Trouble Shooter", is well respected within the Department and has been commended by EPA Regional staffs. Her opinion is sought by subordinates, solicited by peers and counted on by superiors. Yvonne is known for providing solutions and getting things done.

